

LIGHT-HOUSES, BEACONS, &c.

[To accompany bill H. R. No. 475.]

JUNE 4, 1842.

Mr. J. C. CLARK, from the Committee on Commerce, submitted the following

REPORT:

The Committee on Commerce, on reporting the light-house bill, make the following references and suggestions:

The committee forbear to recommend the erection of any light-house, unless its proposed site has been explored and thoroughly examined by some experienced and competent officer of the Government, and its propriety and necessity certified by such officer. This is the only, safe method, as is shown by the report of the Navy Commissioners, made under the act of March 3, 1837. The construction of thirty-one light-houses authorized by that act was arrested in consequence of the surveys, thereby saving to the Government the sum of \$168,000. (See Ex. Doc. 1837-'38, vol. 2., No. 27.)

Nos. 1, 2, and 3. For buoys authorized by the act of 7th July, 1838, and approved by Lieut. Manning of the navy. (See his report, Ex. Doc. 1838-'39, vol. 2, No. 24, pp. 9 and 10.) This is an additional appropriation, the first being insufficient.

No. 4. On petition of Marine Society of Portland and other citizens highly respectable. The frequent and heavy fogs at this place require this bell.

No. 5. Recommended by Captain Parris, United States engineer, and Colonel Thayer, instead of placing a breakwater round the light-house. (See Ex. Doc. 1838-'39, vol. 4, No. 158.) By the acts of 3d March, 1837, and 7th July, 1838, \$20,000 were appropriated for the breakwater. (See also Lieut. Manning's report, as above.)

No. 6. Old houses in a state of great decay—too much so to be repaired.

No. 7. There is no dwelling house, belonging to the United States, attached to this light-house. The keeper lives in his own house. In the event of his dismissal from service for improper conduct, the house would be indispensable.

No. 8. The memorial of thirteen presidents of insurance companies in Boston, of the collector of that port, Gov. Lincoln, of Captain Smith, of the United States navy, and of some of the first merchants in Boston, speaks of this fog bell as a matter of the highest importance.

No. 9. Recommended by Lieutenant Carpender. (See Ex. Doc. 1838-'39, vol. 2. No. 24, p. 34.)

No. 10. This is recommended by the general superintendent. We have two of these lights, of the first order, now in operation at the Never-sinks, near New York. They are spoken of by mariners as being beautiful and effective lights. The committee deem it desirable to try one of these French lenses of the third order with a view of testing its efficiency and economy in the consumption of oil, in comparison with the lamps and reflectors now in general use. (See the report of the committee on lenticular lights, made at this session.)

No. 11. Recommended by Lieutenant Bache, (see document last above quoted, page 82,) to be built on the "South Dumplin." Captain Mather, of the revenue cutter Woolcott, recommended the "North Hammock," or Dumplin. (See *ibid*, p. 77.)

From information derived from the president of the New York Steam Navigation Company, and from other sources, the committee think the "North Dumplin" is the better site.

By the act of July 7, 1838, \$3,000 were appropriated for a light on the "North Dumplin," and were carried to the surplus fund. This is a mere reappropriation for substantially the same object.

No. 12. The old beacons are not worth repairing.

No. 13. The beacon was recommended by Captains Kearney, Sloat, and Perry, United States navy, as were also the buoys.

By the act of July 7, 1838, \$3,400 were appropriated for these objects. This amount has been carried to the surplus fund. It was not enough for the objects intended, and therefore the sum of \$5,655 is now asked.

No. 14. This explains itself.

No. 15. Old light-house gone to decay, and is not worth repairing.

No. 16. Recommended by Captain Skinner, United States navy, and sanctioned by Navy Board, in lieu of one authorized by the act of March 3, 1837, on Pea island. (See report Secretary of the Navy, December 21, 1837, 2d session 25th Congress, Doc. No. 41.)

Lieutenant Hollins recommends it. (See his report, Ex. Doc. 1838-'39, referred to, No. 24, p. 113.)

No. 18. This appropriation was made under act of March 3, 1837, for a light-house on St. Joseph's island, of which Captain Rosseau, of the navy, approved. (See his report, Ex. Doc. 1838-'39, p. 114, as above.) But it was afterward ascertained by Mr. Breedlove, collector at New Orleans, that the island Captain R. had fixed on as the proper site was called "Half-Moon island." This appropriation, therefore, is merely transferred from the one island to the other.

No. 19. This house was burned by the Indians in 1836. It was an important light, and should be built as soon as the war is over. (See Lieutenant Hollins's report, Ex. Doc. 1838-'39, referred to, p. 113.)

By the act of March 3, 1837, \$10,000 were appropriated for this object.

No. 20. This light-house site was approved of by the Navy Commissioners, on an examination and report of an officer of the navy, under the act of March 3, 1837, which appropriated \$20,000. This was altogether too small an amount. The act of 1838 appropriated \$40,000 in addition to the former appropriation. Hitherto the Indian war has prevented the building. The sum is now reappropriated. (See report of Commissioners, Ex. Doc. 1837-'38, vol. 2, No. 27.)

No. 21. Recommended by Captain Rosseau, under the act of July 7, 1838. (See his report, Ex. Doc. 1838-'39, as above, p. 115.)

No. 23. There were appropriated for this house, by the act of 1838, \$25,000. Recommended by Lieutenant Hollins. (See his report, *ibid*, p. 118.)

Sec. 5. It appears, from information derived from persons well acquainted with this shoal, that the light there kept up by the company was highly necessary. The honorable Mr. Grennell makes an affidavit that such is the fact.

In regard to the buoys, it will be observed that none are to be constructed unless the Secretary, on examination, shall deem them necessary. The petitioners for these improvements are persons interested in navigation, and are numerous and respectable.

New appropriations for new lights, &c.	-	-	-	\$27,102
Old appropriations carried to surplus fund, and reappropriated	-	-	-	128,400
Additional appropriations for light-houses, &c., heretofore authorized by law	-	-	-	31,455
Appropriations for rebuilding light-houses burned and gone to decay	-	-	-	87,000
Total in the bill				273,957
Add for fog bell Boston harbor				4,000
				<u>\$277,937</u>

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,
Fifth Auditor's Office, May 31, 1842.

SIR: I have had the honor to receive your letter of the 27th instant, enclosing certain *memorials* in relation to light-houses, &c., as follows:

1st. A memorial for a fog bell, on the plan of Andrew Morse, in Boston harbor.

The only bell established upon this plan was placed at Whitehead, in the State of Maine, in 1839, under an appropriation made July 7th, 1838. The float and machinery immediately connected with it, by which the power was obtained, were carried away by a violent storm in 1840, and were repaired by Mr. Morse himself, at an expense of \$423 55; and during the past winter, a similar injury befel it, which has not yet been repaired.

Desirous of ascertaining the opinion of intelligent, disinterested, and respectable persons, as to the utility of the invention, I instructed Mr. Cummings, the superintendent, in the beginning of the present year, to make the necessary inquiry, and inform me of the result. His answer, bearing date 8th March last, is contained in an extract of a letter from him, herewith enclosed.

Should an appropriation be made for a bell in the harbor of Boston, I would respectfully suggest the propriety of allowing the Treasury Department a discretion as to the employment of Mr. Morse's bell, or one invent-

ed by Mr. Willard, of Boston, and acting on a different principle, which has been repeatedly recommended by machinists of that city.

I have the honor to be your obedient servant,

S. PLEASONTON.

HON. JOHN C. CLARK,

Of the Committee of Commerce, H. R.

Extract of a letter from Nathan Cummings, Esq., superintendent of lights at Portland, Maine, to the Fifth Auditor, dated March 8, 1842.

"In obedience to your instructions, I have made careful inquiry in relation to the plan arranged by Mr. Morse for ringing the fog bell at Whitehead. The result leaves but little doubt on my mind that the expense of sustaining it will be greatly disproportionate to its utility. Mr. Anderson, my predecessor in office, under whose supervision the machinery was erected, also Mr. Isaac Ilsley, a former collector and superintendent of light-houses in this State, to whom I have explained the principle on which it operates, are decidedly of the opinion that the float designed for obtaining the power must of necessity be constantly liable to be destroyed by the sea and ice in violent storms, unless protected by a breakwater of great strength, and that the construction of this, from the depth of water at this place, would be very expensive."

BOSTON, *April*, 1840.

We, the undersigned, with others, addressed a memorial to Congress a year since, praying for the erection or establishment of one of "Morse's fog bells" at the entrance into Boston harbor, at or in the vicinity of the Graves. Believing that the placing of one of those bells in the vicinity of that dangerous navigation would prove of great benefit to the commercial community, we respectfully ask your renewed consideration of that memorial.

We are informed that one established at Whitehead, on the coast of Maine, has proved highly beneficial, and is held in high estimation by shipmasters navigating those waters; and, knowing the interest you take in whatever concerns the interest of commerce, we now renew, through you, our application to Congress as before.

The memorial referred to is probably on the files of Congress.

We have the honor to be, &c.,

H. Watts, <i>Pres. Atlantic Ins. Of.</i>	Robert G. Shaw.
Robert Farley.	Caleb Curtis, <i>Pres. Neptune Ins. Of.</i>
Francis Welsh, <i>Pres. Frank. I. O.</i>	S. W. Sweet, <i>Pres. National I. O.</i>
Thomas Lamb, <i>Pres. Wash'n I. O.</i>	John L. Dimmock, <i>Pres. Warren I. O.</i>
Jos. H. Adams, <i>Pres. Ocean I. O.</i>	Lemuel Pope, <i>Pres. Boston I. O.</i>
J. Ingersol Bowdich, <i>Pres. Am. I. O.</i>	Nath'l Meriam, <i>Pres. Merc. Mar. I. O.</i>
Daniel C. Bacon.	William Sturges.

To the Hon. JOHN DAVIS,

Senator in Congress.

THOMASTON, MAINE, *May 19, 1842.*

DEAR SIR: I have to-day seen Captain Jonathan Norton, whose affidavit respecting the subject of your letter I send herewith. He is well known to me, and to be relied upon. The truth is, the keeper of the light at Whitehead, being wholly incapacitated for taking care of the bell machinery, is apprehensive of being made to give place to some body who knows how to manage it. He seeks to avoid the danger by slandering the fog bell, and by making the light-house commissioner believe that it is useless to put it in operation again. The present keeper is wholly unfit for his place, and ought never to have been appointed. This is known to every body who knows him. The facts stated by Captain Norton can be substantiated by many others residing in the neighborhood of the light.

Whether a float can be made to stand at the very exposed place it occupied at Whitehead, or not, has nothing to do with the question of the value and usefulness of Morse's plan of ringing. The float is but a subordinate part of the invention. In almost any other situation, the float would be less exposed to the seas. They may undoubtedly be located so as to be perfectly secure from accident. In the worse situations, they would be subject to no more hazard than are our floating-lights; and Morse's machinery might be put on a small vessel, and maintained at a tenth of the expense of a floating-light. The machinery to which the float gives motion is perfect in its character, and admirably effects the purpose designed. It may be calculated to strike a blow equal to the strength of any bell whatever. Morse regulated that at Whitehead to strike as heavy a blow as, in his judgment, the bell would bear. I understand much complaint is made by ship owners and masters that it is not put again in operation.

I have only time to add that I am, very respectfully, yours,

JOHN RUGGLES.

GEORGE H. SNELLING, Esq., *Washington.*

I, Jonathan Norton, of St. George, State of Maine, shipmaster, do depose and say, that I reside in the immediate vicinity of Whitehead light—have resided there upwards of forty years; that I am well acquainted with the difficulties in the navigation in the vicinity of Whitehead, and also with the operation and usefulness of Morse's fog bell at that place. Prior to its establishment, about three years since, many vessels annually got into difficulty and suffered damage, and many more were delayed and came to anchor, losing their passage sometimes for several days. Between the Whitehead and the outer islands is a great thoroughfare for vessels passing coastwise from Boston, &c., to Bangor, and all the Eastern ports. In fogs and thick weather, vessels cannot navigate it with safety, unless directed by the sound of a bell. Before Morse's perpetual bell was put in operation, I used to be called upon twenty or thirty times a year to aid in relieving vessels from difficulty—getting among the ledges. I recollect three being ashore in one day, and have seen twenty sail at a time, at anchor, fearing to run by the head. Since the establishment of the perpetual bell, I have been called on but once, and that to pilot a vessel into Seal harbor, inside of Whitehead; and have never known vessels de-

tained, from fear of running, in a single instance, nor one vessel to get into difficulty.

The bell is one that was placed there many years before Morse applied his machinery. They tried some clock-work, but it answered no purpose, and was rung by hand; but no confidence can be placed in a ringing by hand: the sound is often most wanted when the ringer is asleep. It was never of any use till Morse applied his machinery, as the above facts show; and never will be, to be rung by hand, because that can never be depended on. It is wanted mainly in fogs, which often come up suddenly and in the night, when the keeper is asleep, or in the day, when absent.

I further depose and say, that the float from which the power is obtained was placed in a very exposed situation, where it encountered heavy seas; but it was so fixed that I did not doubt its sufficiency to resist the force. It had successfully resisted many very heavy storms without the slightest injury. When carried away, three or four months since, the storm and sea were very light, compared with many it had encountered. A small brace of fir, which supported a vertical mast of fifteen or seventeen feet high, which sustained the poising weight, got out, and the mast fell down, leaving the float without its regulator; still the float remained without injury for two or three weeks, and the mast might have been replaced and a new brace put in more securely at a trifling expense, or the float might have easily been unhung from the hinges and taken round into a small cove. The keeper was informed by several persons that he ought to take care of it, but it was neglected; and the next storm that arose, the float, being left to beat down on the rocks, deprived of its suspending weight, was thus broken away. From my own personal knowledge of the matter, I am satisfied that the fault was not in the storms or the float, and that, with seasonable care and attention, the float and bell might now have been in most useful operation.

JONATHAN NORTON.

STATE OF MAINE, *Lincoln county, ss*:

There personally appeared the above-named Jonathan Norton, and made oath to the truth of the foregoing affidavit, by him subscribed before me.

GEORGE ABBOTT, *Justice of the Peace.*

MAY 19, 1842.

THOMASTON, MAINE, *April 14, 1842.*

DEAR SIR: Your letter of inquiry came in my absence from home. The same cause has been in the way of a reply till now. Your inquiries respecting the "fog bell" at Whitehead light-house, a few miles from this, I will now answer.

I was appointed, with S. Dwight, Esq., to examine and report to Mr. Anderson, late collector of Portland and superintendent of light-houses in Maine, our opinion of the machinery and structure connected with that bell when it was first put in operation by Mr. Morse. We examined it with much care at that time, and I have frequently seen it since, and particularly noticed its operation.

I do not think it more subject to get out of repair than any other machinery—not more so, when properly constructed, than any common clock,

or but little more so. I speak of the machinery within the bell-house. That, with proper care, will seldom need any repairs. The float, on which the tide and swells of the sea are to give impulse to the machinery, is a little more liable to casualties; though that depends upon its exposure to heavy seas. In protected situations it would stand for many years without occasion for repairs. The float at Whitehead has been subjected to damage twice. There has been much reason to believe that it was not altogether *accidental*—the first time certainly; and the principal part of the injury done, at the last misfortune which befel it, might undoubtedly have been prevented by ordinary care on the part of the light-keeper. A single brace got loose, of which he was advised, and he might at that time have prevented any further injury, but he let it remain until the whole float was destroyed. If I were Secretary of the Treasury, I would remove him instantly.

As a general thing, the bell at Whitehead has worked admirably, and has been of great service to navigation in thick weather. Much interest is felt by shipmasters and ship owners in having it again put in operation. The machinery at the bell-house, and every thing but the float, is in perfect order.

In answer to your general inquiry, I will say that I regard Mr. Morse's invention as one of much importance to the interests of commerce and navigation. If bells upon this principle were established at the points of difficult navigation and exposure on the coast, they could not fail to be the means of saving a great deal of property and many lives, besides facilitating the navigation of difficult and narrow channels in foggy and thick weather. It is just what is wanted at Execution rocks, in Long Island sound. Hampton light it within three-quarters of a mile of the rocks. In thick weather, when the light cannot be seen, they embarrass the navigation exceedingly. A light-boat is of no use in a fog, when mariners can hardly see the length of the vessel. A shrill-toned bell is what is wanting, and all that is wanting. Its annual expense would not be a tithe of that of a light-boat, for which application was made to Congress a year or two ago. The entrance to Boston harbor is another place where a perpetual bell would be of infinite advantage to vessels entering the harbor in thick weather.

Very respectfully, yours,

JOHN RUGGLES.

GEORGE H. SNELLING, Esq., *Boston*.

WASHINGTON CITY, June 6, 1842.

The undersigned, having examined in the Patent Office a model of Morse's apparatus for ringing an alarm bell, to give notice of danger in time of fogs, would express the opinion that said apparatus is highly ingenious, and well adapted to its purpose.

A limit can scarcely be assigned to the mechanical power which a floating apparatus, actuated by the swell of the sea and the rise and fall of tides, is capable of exerting. Bells of the largest size may be brought into action by means of this power, and may give an alarm at any distance at which their sounds can be heard.

On many parts of the Atlantic coast, the frequent occurrence of fogs renders light-houses for the time unavailing, and requires some substitute to warn the mariner of impending danger.

WALTER R. JOHNSON,
Prof. of Chem. and Nat. Phil. in Pa. College.

FOG BELLS.

At the request of the late Colonel Loammi Baldwin, Captain Joseph Smith, of the United States navy, Dr. Charles T. Jackson, and others, an appropriation was made by Congress, in 1838, for the erection of a fog bell on Whitehead, at the entrance of Penobscot bay, to be rung by power obtained from the tide, on a plan arranged by Andrew Morse, jr., and explained by him to the above-named gentlemen. This bell was erected and has been in successful operation for two seasons past. The principles on which it is constructed and operates will be understood from the following extracts from the report of commissioners who were requested by the Treasury Department to examine the machinery and report their opinion of its "value and fitness for the purposes intended."

Extracts.

The power which rings the bell is obtained by the rise and fall of the tide, and the "swells" which, at that place, are constant and unceasing. One end of a large stick of timber, near 30 feet in length, projects out upon the water, the other end being confined by braces and chains to the middle of another stout timber, some 20 feet long, which lies along the shore, hinged at each end to a projecting rock; both together forming a T. From their point of junction, a small timber rises vertically to the height of 18 or 20 feet, being well braced to its position; to the upper part of this mast is attached a chain, which, with a continuous rod of iron, extends up to the bell-house, a distance of about 140 feet. This chain receives, from the vibrations of the outer end of the long timber, and a "take-up weight" in the bell-house, a constant reciprocating motion, which, acting upon the machinery in the bell-house, winds up the heavy weight of about 2,000 pounds, that drives both the regulating and striking part of the apparatus. The peculiar arrangement of wheels, &c., called the "maintaining power," which enables the weight to perform these two offices at the same time, without either interfering with the operation of the other, is an ingenious invention, yet quite simple, and not likely to get out of order. Ordinarily, the action of the float greatly exceeds what is required to wind up the weight; and there is an arrangement by which, when the weight is wound up, the connecting wheels are thrown out of gear, leaving the float to act without effect, until the weight descends to a certain point, when the connexion is formed again. The bell is struck four times a minute by hammers weighing about 15 pounds, and the blow appears to be as heavy as the bell will bear with safety. The force of the blow may be increased or diminished at pleasure.

The desideratum seems to have been to arrive at some mode of ringing fog bells which should ensure certainty and constancy. That which depends upon the personal attention of the light-keeper, as experience has

shown, can never be relied on. Dense fogs often arise suddenly, when the keeper is absent, or during the night, when the bell is silent, and the keeper asleep; and mariners, relying upon hearing a bell where there is one, often fall into danger, and meet with disaster from that very reliance. At some seasons of the year, when fogs are frequent, or when, as sometimes they obscure the lights, even at the distance of a few rods, for several days and nights in succession, safety to the mariner, so far as fog bells are concerned, is to be found only in the *sleepless* vigilance of the keeper, which is not to be looked for without the expense of two or three more keepers, nor even then.

After carefully examining Mr. Morse's machinery, and witnessing its operation, as applied at Whitehead, from the best consideration we are able to give it, the undersigned concur in the opinion that the object sought has been fully and successfully accomplished by it, and that for such purpose it is a valuable invention, which promises to be, in many places, an important auxiliary to the means of protecting vessels from the disasters which, on our rocky and ragged coasts, so often befall them.

JOHN RUGGLES.
SULLIVAN DWIGHT.

The following testimonials, from experienced shipmasters and others, show the importance attached by them to this improvement, and justify the inventor in calling the attention of the public to it, in view of its bearing on the interests of commerce and humanity:

Boston, *December 3, 1840.*

SIR: Having been repeatedly guided in my course by the sound of your "perpetual fog bell," now in successful operation at Whitehead, on the coast of Maine, and being fully satisfied that your invention is invaluable to the commercial interest generally, I can cheerfully give my testimony in favor of it, and recommend the same in the highest terms of approbation to that portion of the public who feel an interest in the preservation of life and property at sea. By the assistance of your bell, placed upon all the dangerous points of our coast, the mariner would be guided with unerring certainty in his course through the most dense fogs, and not be obliged, as he now frequently is, to lay for many days, waiting for the fog to clear away, and many times, to the imminent peril of those subjected to this inconvenience. As your invention has stood the test of the sea unharmed, while in its most violent state of agitation, with the float, by which the power to ring the bell is obtained, boldly exposed to its full force, I cannot but feel the fullest assurance of its success to resist the force where you shall think it practicable to apply it.

With the sincere wish for the success which your valuable invention merits, I subscribe myself, respectfully, &c.,

THOMAS HOWES,
Commander of steamer North America.

To ANDREW MORSE, JR.

To whom it may concern :

It gives me great pleasure to recommend to the favorable consideration of all persons interested in the navigation of vessels upon the British and American coasts the *fog bell* lately invented and put into perfect operation by Mr. Andrew Morse, jr., the bearer hereof. I consider this bell as the only completely successful attempt which has ever been made to navigate our waters in dense fogs. I am master of the steamboat Bangor, which plies between Boston and Bangor, by way of Portland. For the two last seasons, I have been able to run my boat into and out of Penobscot bay in the thick fogs which frequently occur, by the aid of one of Mr. Morse's fog bells, situate on Whitehead, a promontory in the mouth of the bay. Without the assistance of this bell, I should have been compelled very frequently to have stopped on my passage. The bell on Whitehead is placed in an exposed situation. It nevertheless has withstood the action of the tides and the wind, and is still in perfect order. I most sincerely hope that these bells will be placed all along this dangerous coast, for the protection of our commerce and the lives of our mariners. I add most cheerfully that Mr. Morse is a gentleman of acknowledged genius, and deserves much praise for this and other valuable mechanical improvements, which he has introduced within a few years past among his countrymen. Very respectfully,

S. H. HOWES, *Captain of steamer Bangor.*

Boston, December 4, 1840.

U. S. REVENUE CUTTER MORRIS,

Portland Harbor, December 9, 1840.

SIR: Having had occasion to visit Whitehead, at the entrance of Penobscot bay, as much as twice a month during the last year, and observing the operation of your fog-bell machinery, which has stood the test of all the heavy gales and sea we have had upon the coast, and now remains in perfect order, my officers and myself duly appreciate the usefulness of your invention, and you have my sincere wishes that you may reap the reward and receive the credit your ingenuity so well deserves. To all persons navigating our coast, owing to the great prevalence of dense fogs and the uncertainty of soundings, the advantage of such bells, as a guide, must be of incalculable benefit. In approaching this bell in thick fogs, it has been heard by all on board much more distinctly, and at a greater distance, than any other bell upon the coast, although of a much less weight.

Yours, respectfully,

GREEN WALDEN, *Captain.*

To Mr. ANDREW MORSE, JR.

To the Public.

About the first of June last, I received an appointment to take charge, as keeper, of the light-house and fog bell at Whitehead, in place of Marshall's Point light-house. I have since that time had charge of the bell machinery established by Mr. Morse. The necessity of bells rung in thick foggy weather, to coast mariners passing dangerous rocks, points, and

shoals, also in gaining channels in such obscured times, not only in saving property, but life, is known and experienced by most seamen.

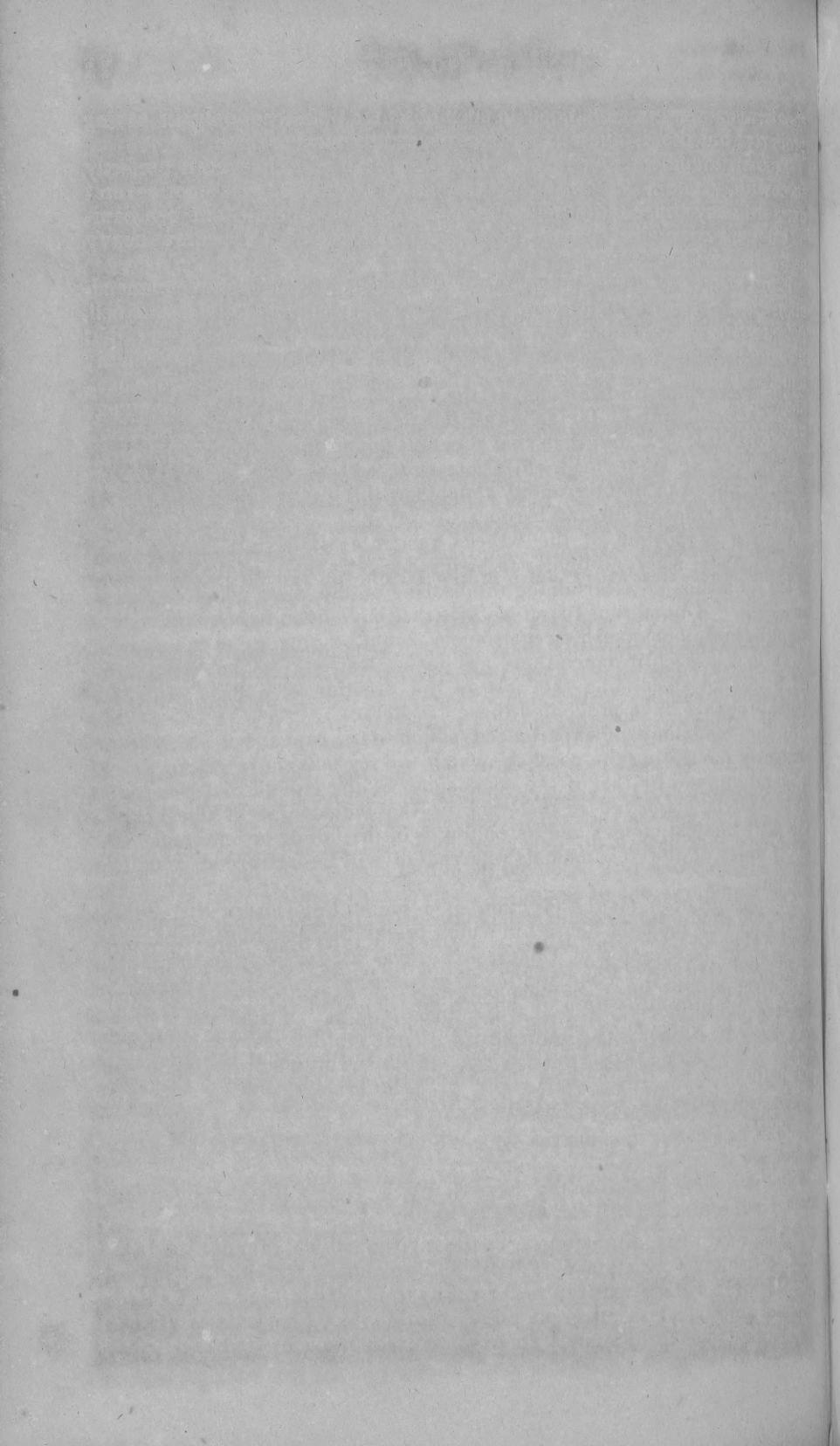
This arrangement, since I have had the charge of it, has been perfectly successful. The float, from which the power is obtained, has stood several extraordinary times uninjured; the machinery that operates the bell hammer is well adapted, and has worked finely, and the blow appears as heavy as the bell will bear with safety.

From what experience I have had of the sea, and the high recommendation that a great number of pilots and shipmasters have given the bell, (when visiting it,) stating their peculiar situation, and the assistance that the sound of the bell had been to them, I consider it invaluable, and highly important to have others established on the dangerous points of our coast, and sincerely hope that Mr. Morse will receive that pecuniary advantage as well as approbation for so valuable an invention he so richly deserves.

[WILLIAM PERRY, Jr.,

*Keeper of the light-house and fog bell,
at Whitehead, St. George, Maine.*

WHITEHEAD, ST. GEORGE, December 12, 1840.



[To be appended to report No. 837.]

Petition of a number of citizens of Boston, Massachusetts, praying the erection of a fog bell at the entrance of Boston harbor.

APRIL 26, 1842.

To the honorable the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States in Congress assembled :

The subscribers, inhabitants of the city of Boston, respectfully pray that a fog bell, rung by the action of the tide, upon the plan arranged by Andrew Morse, jr., similar to that erected, under the authority of an act of Congress, at Whitehead, off Thomaston, on the coast of Maine, and which has been in uninterrupted action for three years, may be erected near the entrance of Boston harbor.

A great proportion of the wrecks on our coast have taken place in thick weather, when no lights can be discerned by the mariner, and when he has no means of ascertaining the bearing of the coast which he is approaching. A numerous list of vessels that have been wrecked within a recent period, under such circumstances, could be given, and it could be shown that in each instance there has been a loss of revenue to the United States far exceeding the cost of the erection of a fog bell, which would probably have prevented these disasters.

By the testimony of experienced shipmasters, captains of steamboats, constantly navigating the coast on which the fog bell above referred to is in operation, and by that of the commander of the United States revenue cutter Morris, employed in that quarter, the great value of this bell, as a security against danger and detention, is in the fullest manner established. Copies of the testimonials referred to will be forwarded with this petition.

An appropriation for the erection of a fog bell in Boston harbor was made a part of the light-house bill which passed the Senate of the United States at the last session of Congress, but was not taken up in the House of Representatives. Your petitioners respectfully pray that steps may be taken at the present session to secure the object of this petition, either by a separate enactment, or the passage of a bill in which the provision of the former year shall be included—being satisfied that the prayer of this petition is of the highest importance to the interests of the commerce and revenue of the United States, as well as to the cause of humanity.

C. CURTIS, *Prest. Neptune Ins. Co.*

S. W. SWETT, *Prest. National Ins. Co.*

LEMUEL POPE, *Prest. Boston Ins. Co.*

NATH. MERIAM, *Prest. Merc. Mar. Ins. Co.*

J. INGERSOLL BOWDITCH, *Prest. Amer. Ins. Co.*

ROBERT B. WILLIAMS, *Prest. U. States Ins. Co.*

THOMAS LAMB, *Prest. Washington Ins. Co.*

JOSEPH BALCH, *Prest. of Merchants' Ins. Co.*

N. G. SNELLING, *Prest. Mass. F. & M. Ins. Co.*

J. WATTS, *Pres. Atlantic Ins. Co.*
 BENJ. SEWALL, *Prest. City M. Ins. Co.*
 JOHN G. NAZRO, *Prest. Tremont Ins. Co.*
 P. W. HAYWARD, *Prest. Suffolk Ins. Co.*
 FREDERIC TUDOR.
 ABBOTT LAWRENCE.
 CURTIS & STEVENSON.
 S. HOOPER.
 P. & S. SPRAGUE & CO.
 J. SCHOLFIELD, Jr.
 SAMUEL QUINCY.

From frequent representations made to me by intelligent and respectable gentlemen, interested in navigation, I am perfectly satisfied that the subject of the foregoing memorial is deserving of high consideration, and that the construction asked for would greatly tend to the security of property, and the protection of the lives of seamen on board ships entering this harbor in thick weather.

LEVI LINCOLN,
Collector of the port of Boston and Charlestown.

I fully concur in the opinion expressed above.

JOS. SMITH, *Captain U. S. N.*

UNITED STATES SHIP OHIO, Boston, April 18, 1842.